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VIA ELECTRONIC FILING

Jocelyn G. Boyd, Esquire
Chief Clerk & Administrator
Public Service Commission of South Carolina
101 Executive Center Drive, Suite 100
Columbia, South Carolina 29210

RE: Public Service Commission Review of South Carolina Code of Regulations
Chapter 103 Pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 1-23-120(J) – S.C. Code Ann.
Regs. 103-600 *et seq.*: Telecommunications Utilities
Docket No. 2020-247-A

Dear Ms. Boyd:

The Office of Regulatory Staff has reviewed the comments filed by other parties to this docket relating to the Public Service Commission's telecommunications regulations, S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 103-600 *et seq.*, ORS also offers the following responses to comments from the South Carolina Telephone Coalition ("SCTC") and South Carolina Cable Television Association ("SCCTA").

A. Response to SC Telephone Coalition Comments

1. Comments ORS does not Oppose

ORS does not oppose SCTC's redline edits to Regulations 103-690 and 130-690.1. ORS believes that SCTC's edits will help the Commission's regulations remain consistent with FCC regulations going forward and will help to streamline the existing regulations while still retaining important customer protection provisions. Additionally, ORS would recommend an additional amendment to change the second sentence of Regulation 103-690.1(B)(b) as follows:

"The information shall be submitted at the wire-center level of designation."

ORS does not oppose SCTC's recommendation to amend Reg. 103-628.C (Complaints) to clarify that ORS's investigatory charge relates to regulated services subject to clarification that the proposed amendment recognizes that the ORS refers customers with complaints related to non-regulated services to appropriate points of contact.

ORS does not oppose the SCTC's recommendations relating to Regulations 103-631 (Directories), 103-652 (Testing Facilities), 103-663.2 (Equipment Requirements), and 103-680 through 103-684 (Telecommunications Relay Service Advisory Committee).

2. Comment on Regulations 103-618 (Service Reports) and 103-619 (Held Applications/Availability of Service).

ORS regularly reviews quarterly reporting on service quality and held applications and recommends retaining this reporting requirement. While many companies do not experience service quality issues, ORS has had some issues and recommends that the quarterly service and held applications reporting requirements are appropriate for ETCs. Quarterly reporting better allows ORS to detect a quality of service degradation and to work with the Company to resolve issues before they greatly impact the quality of service.

B. Response to SC Cable Television Association Comments

1. Comments ORS Does Not Oppose

ORS does not oppose SCTCA's comments related to 103-690.B.5, *et seq.*, to remove the reference throughout the ETC regulations to "Link Up Service" consistent with ORS's initial comments. ORS does not oppose SCTCA's comments related Regulation 103-690.C.(a)(5) and Regulation 103-690.1.B(b)(8).

2. Response to Other SCCTA Comments on Regulation 103-690

As discussed above, ORS does not oppose the proposed changes to Regulations 103-690 and 103-690.1 proposed by the SCTC. The SCTC's recommended changes to Regulation 103-690 retain reporting requirements and customer protections that SCCTA's recommendations would not.

ORS opposes SCCTA's comments regarding Regulation 103-690.C.(a)(1)(B). SCCTA appears to recommend eliminating the improvement plan requirement altogether. ORS prefers SCTC's proposed amendments to Regulation 103-690. While the SCTC does propose striking Regulation 103-690.C.(a)(1)(B), the SCTC's proposal also incorporates the improvement plan reporting requirements under 47 C.F.R 54.202. If SCCTA wishes to pursue this recommendation further, ORS recommends that it submit a redline version of its proposed changes to allow for additional review.

ORS opposes SCCTA's comments regarding Regulation 103-690.C.(b). ORS would recommend additional review of any recommendations to eliminate the "cream skimming" prohibition of 103-690.C(b) and to permit ETC designation at the partial census block level. If SCCTA wishes to pursue this recommendation further, ORS recommends that it submit a redline version of its proposed changes to allow for additional review.

3. Response to Other SCCTA Comments on Regulation 103-690.1

ORS opposes the SCCTA's comments on Regulation 103-690.1.B.(b)(1) regarding service improvement reporting and progress reporting. As discussed above, ORS prefers the SCTC's recommended changes to Regulation 103-690. These changes, through their reference to the service improvement reporting requirements of 47 C.F.R. 54.202, do retain an initial service improvement reporting requirement in Regulation 103-690.

ORS opposes the SCCTA's comments on Regulation 103-690.1.B.(b)(2) relating to outage reporting. ORS does not agree with SCCTA that the reporting requirements of Regulation 103-690.1.B.(b)(2) is duplicative of Regulation 103-614. First, because the reporting requirements of Regulation 103-614 apply only to telephone utilities, ETC's that are not telephone utilities are not subject to its reporting requirements. Second, while Regulation 103-614 requires telephone utilities to report to the Commission and ORS any information required to be reported to the FCC regarding outages, Regulation 103-690.1.B.(b)(2) establishes reporting requirements for South Carolina ETC's in addition to the FCC's requirements. Specifically, Regulation 103-690.1.B.(b)(2) provides more detailed reporting requirements than the FCC regulation it references, 47 C.F.R. § 4.5. ORS regularly reviews the information required to be submitted by telephone utilities pursuant to Regulation 103-690.1.B.(b)(2). ORS recommends that this reporting requirement be retained to allow ORS to detect a quality of service degradation and work with the company to resolve any issues before they greatly impact the quality of service.

ORS opposes the SCCTA's comments on Regulation 103-690.1.B.(b)(3). SCCTA states that the FCC no longer requires unfulfilled service request reporting because the FCC uses other means to measure an ETC's network build-out progress. However, unfulfilled service request reporting is important for other reasons. Unfulfilled service request information is useful for identifying those communities in South Carolina without access to service and to assess and resolve the reasons for lack of access. This reporting requirement acts as a "check and balance." ORS recommends that this reporting requirement be retained.

With respect to SCCTA's recommendation relating to Regulation 103-690.1.E.(a)(4), ORS prefers the SCTC's recommendation to amend 103-690.1.E(a) by including reference to 47 C.F.R. Part 54, Subpart E. This will ensure that the Commission's regulations track the FCC's requirements for universal support for low-income consumers now and in the future.

* * *

ORS appreciates the opportunity to submit these reply comments and looks forward to participating in the Commission's May 21st workshop.

Sincerely,

/s/ Alexander W. Knowles
Alexander W. Knowles

cc: All Parties of Record (via e-mail)
David Butler, Esquire (via e-mail)